

NASA and NOAA's GOES-P Satellite Successfully Launched



The latest Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite, or GOES-P, lifted off Thursday aboard a Delta IV rocket at 6:57 p.m. EST from Space Launch Complex 37 at the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, USA. The new National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) satellite joins four other similar spacecraft to improve weather forecasting and monitoring of environmental events.

Approximately four hours and 21 minutes after liftoff, the spacecraft separated from the launch vehicle. The NASA Deep Space Network tracking site in Canberra, Western Australia, monitored the spacecraft separation.

"It's a great day for NASA and NOAA, as this last launch completes the spacecraft in the GOES N-P series," said Andre Dress, the NASA GOES Deputy Project Manager. "It means the hard work and dedication from this team during the past 12-plus years all has been worth it. Our review of the spacecraft and launch vehicle data shows that GOES-P is in a nominal transfer orbit with all spacecraft systems functioning properly."

GOES-P is the third and final spacecraft in the GOES N Series of geostationary environmental weather satellites. On March 13, GOES-P is scheduled to be placed in its final orbit and renamed GOES-15.

NOAA has two operational GOES satellites hovering 22,300 miles above the equator, GOES-12 in the east and GOES-11 in the west. Each provides continuous observations of environmental conditions in North, Central and South America and the surrounding oceans. GOES-13 is being moved to replace GOES-12, which will be positioned to provide coverage for South America as part of the Global Earth Observing System of Systems, or GEOSS.

NASA contracted with Boeing Space and Intelligence Systems of Seal Beach, Calif., to build and launch the GOES-P spacecraft. Approximately 20 days after launch, Boeing Space and Intelligence Systems will turn engineering control over to NASA. About five months later, NASA will transfer operational control of GOES-15 to NOAA. The satellite will be checked out and stored on-orbit. It will be available for activation should one of the operational GOES satellites degrade or exhaust their fuel.

NOAA manages the GOES program, establishes requirements, provides all funding and distributes environmental satellite data for the United States. NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md., procures and manages the design, development and launch of the satellites for NOAA on a cost reimbursable basis. NASA's Launch Services Program at the NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida supported the GOES-P launch in an advisory role.